

*7th Sunday After Pentecost*  
*Adaptive Worship Service*  
*July 19, 2020*



1812 North Highland Avenue  
Clearwater, Florida 33755  
Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

727-446-5026  
[office@GraceCLW.com](mailto:office@GraceCLW.com)  
Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: [GraceCLW.com](http://GraceCLW.com)

## **ADAPTIVE SERVICE OF THE WORD**

### **GREETING**

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**Congregation: And also with you.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Worship Leader: Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Congregation: Amen.**

### **FIRST READING**

**Isaiah 44:6-8**

Introduction to the Lesson: *There are no other gods besides God: the word of the Lord does not fail to come to pass. We can trust in God, through whom Israel—and we—are redeemed.*

Reader: "6 The Lord, who rules and protects Israel,  
the Lord Almighty, has this to say:

"I am the first, the last, the only God;  
there is no other god but me.

7 Could anyone else have done what I did?

Who could have predicted all that would happen  
from the very beginning to the end of time?[a]

8 Do not be afraid, my people!

You know that from ancient times until now

I have predicted all that would happen,  
and you are my witnesses.

Is there any other god?

Is there some powerful god I never heard of?"

*After the reading...*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL LESSON**

**Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

Introduction to the Gospel: *Jesus tells a parable about the coexistence of good and evil in this world. God's judgment will remove all evildoers and causes of sin, but not until the end of human history.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew in the 13th chapter.

**Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.**

Worship Leader: 24 Jesus told them another parable: "The Kingdom of heaven is like this. A man sowed good seed in his field. 25 One night, when everyone was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. 26 When the plants grew and the heads of grain began to form, then the weeds showed up. 27 The man's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, it was good seed you sowed in your field; where did the weeds come from?' 28 'It was some enemy who did this,' he answered. 'Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?' they asked him. 29 'No,' he answered, 'because as you gather the weeds you might pull up some of the wheat along with them. 30 Let the wheat and the weeds both grow together until harvest. Then I will tell the harvest workers to pull up the weeds first, tie them in bundles and burn them, and then to gather in the wheat and put it in my barn.'"

36 When Jesus had left the crowd and gone indoors, his disciples came to him and said, "Tell us what the parable about the weeds in the field means."

37 Jesus answered, "The man who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man; 38 the field is the world; the good seed is the people who belong to the Kingdom; the weeds are the people who belong to the Evil One; 39 and the enemy who sowed the weeds is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvest workers are angels. 40 Just as the weeds are gathered up and burned in the fire, so the same thing will happen at the end of the age: 41 the Son of Man will send out his angels to gather up out of his Kingdom all those who cause people to sin and all others who do evil things, 42 and they will throw them into the fiery furnace, where they will cry and gnash their teeth. 43 [a]Then God's people will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Listen, then, if you have ears!"

*After the reading...*

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

**Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

### Impossible Purity

Maybe you have bought or been offered bottled water recently. Did it say “purified” on it? Did you assume that meant the water was totally pure? What if you learned that bottled water, even purified, always has some contaminants in it? Would you still drink it? You probably did.

Jesus’ parable of the weeds among the wheat reminds us of our desire for purity. It is tempting on first reading the parable to immediately ask ourselves, *So, who is a weed and who is wheat?* We might wonder if the people we don’t like much are weeds. We might also be anxious to know whether *we* are wheat, children of the kingdom. Sorting it all out now and purifying the field would make things simpler.

Except everything in the parable says we don’t get to sort things out! Surprisingly, Jesus lowers our sense of urgency to sort out good from bad in life. Jesus says it is better to live with ambiguity, better to accept impurity, than to try so hard to clean everything up now. Why? Because we risk great harm to others in trying to obtain a level of purity we can never have in this life.

The desire for purity, especially among religious persons, can be strong. For some, this means getting rid of people who fail to live up to certain moral standards. For others, it means judging people based on who we label them to be. But total purity never exists in nature, nor in humanity as a whole, nor in any single person.

Rather than worrying about whom to get rid of, with Jesus’ help we trust that we are children of the kingdom by God’s grace. We are included. When we know we are included and loved, we don’t need to worry about another’s status. That’s for God to worry about. We are free to love others and ourselves, and to let God sort out the rest.

## SERMON

### HYMN OF THE DAY

### *Gather Us In*



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark - ness  
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys - t'ry, we are the old who  
3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter, here we will take the  
4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings  
yearn for your face; we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,  
bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,  
light years a - way— here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.  
called to be light to the whole hu - man race.  
call us a - new to be salt for the earth.  
now is the king - dom, and now is the day.



Gath - er us in, the lost and for - sak - en, gath - er us in, the  
Gath - er us in, the rich and the haugh - ty, gath - er us in, the  
Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, give us to eat the  
Gath - er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath - er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,  
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly,  
bread that is you; nour - ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion  
make us your own; gath - er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.  
give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.  
lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.  
fire . . of love in our flesh and our bone.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: GATHER US IN, Marty Haugen

Text and music © 1982 GIA Publications Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Called into unity with one another and the whole creation, let us pray for our shared world.

Prayer Leader: God of the harvest, you sow the good seed of the gospel of Jesus Christ into your field. Help your church throughout the world to be both diligent and patient,

full of resolve and gentleness, that our witness may be faithful to your intentions. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: God of the seasons, in the midst of summer, give us refreshment, renewal, and new opportunities. We pray for the safety of those who travel. We pray for those who cannot take the rest they need. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: God of hope, you accompany those who suffer and are near to the brokenhearted. Open our hearts to your children who are lonely and abandoned, who feel trapped by despair, and all who suffer in any way (*especially* Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia and family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vici Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Missy, Penny, & Henry, Lisa and Ty Hauschild, Rob Rodriguez and family, Marcus de Souza Lima, Maria de Nazare & Michele Rios those suffering from natural disasters (including COVID-19 and the flooding across the United States), violence, & terror, and the family and friends of the over 135,000 people in the United States & the 500,000 people worldwide who have died from COVID-19 including Anka Pink's grandmother. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Worship Leader: Receive these prayers, O God, and those too deep for words; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

*Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at [GraceCLW.com](http://GraceCLW.com) (look for the "Donate" button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.*

## OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

**Congregation: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## BLESSING

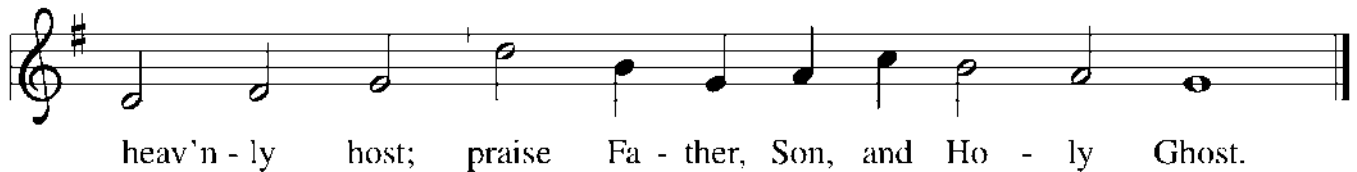
Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace .

**Congregation: Amen.**

## SENDING SONG

### *Doxology*

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all  
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye



Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

## **DISMISSAL**

**Pastor:** Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God!**

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #27824.

Scriptures and additional materials quoted are from the Good News Bible © 1994 published by the Bible Societies/HarperCollins Publishers Ltd UK, Good News Bible© American Bible Society 1966, 1971, 1976, 1992. Used with permission.